DAGON

ISSUE 8

DAGON only 70p

For FRP's of CoC

Contents

Cover illustration by Gary Marshall.....P.1

Contents.....P.2

Editorial.....P.3

THE LEGACY OF ARTHUR NYE by Andy Bennison
A CoC scenario for 2-4 characters.....P.4

COMPUTERISING CTHULHU by Marcus L. Rowland
CoC NPC generation program and additional player aid program for Keepers.....P.13

'WARE THE MOON by Paul Newman
A look at Werwolves intended to clear up some of the misconceptions given in recent articles and films.....P.16

DR. PHIBES PRESCRIBES
Fanzine coverage and alternative buys.....P.19

PSYCHOPATHY by Alan Jeffrey
A characters better course of action when dealing with the Cthulhoids.....P.20

THE VOICE FROM THE WELL by Robert J. Curran
The first chilling instalment of a Mythos tale, set in 'Nooseneck Country'.....P.21

BLACK MAIL
The lettercol. for CoC/HPL enthusiasts....P.26

CTHULHOID TALES OF TERROR by Carl Ford
The first part of a listing of the better Mythos tales by authors other than HPL....P.29

CTHULHOID RAMBLINGS by Dave Perry
More readers views on how to improve CoC..P.30

Subscription notes, thanks, plugs etc.....P.31

Back Cover illustration by Mark Ketherington

SAN. STEALERS from NEIL ROWLANDS

Q: What do you call it when Lovecraft is cheeky?

A: H.P. Sauce

Q: Which is the flattest monster in Britain?

A: Well, there are 3 millon people on the Dhole.

One Deep One to another:
'Where's all da fish?

2nd Deep One: Oh, Dagon.....

Aaarrggghhhh!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

May I take this opportunity to apologise to Mr. Trevor Mendham, concerning several comments made in last issues report of GAMESFAIR. It has since been pointed out to me that Trevor did not 'run' the fanzine stand there, so any lack of order that may have resulted from the sales service concerning the fanzines was not down to him!

As you must all know by now 'Masks of Nyarlathotep' is now on sale over here, I haven't examined the 'thing' closely but despite the excellent layout seems a bit of a rip-off at £20 - but then again I always say it's the quality not.... (Does anyone care to review it for DAGON.... please..).

With the anniversary of Mike Lewis' handling of the PRESS CUTTINGS in IMAGINE comes a new format for the fanzine coverage and fan scene, Mike needs all your support if the column is to be successful, so why not drop him a few lines concerning your comments, etc. It seems that IMAGINE are trying to give some solid support to the fanzines and hobby in general with this very bold move, I wish them every success and hope that DAGON readers can help push things along for them, drop them a line eh.

CTHULHOID FILM NEWS...STOP PRESS...CTHULHOID FILM NEWS...STOP PRESS...CTHULHOID FILM

REANIMATOR is the title of a version of HPL's classic tale concerning Herbert West. For once the film is definate, having been filmed, SPFX'd, cut and edited by Stuart Gordon. Jeffrey Combs has the main role of the scientist dedicated to bringing back the dead.

PLAYER HANDOUT

5 Main Street
Fiddler's Creek
Minden
Louisiana

October 8th, 1924

Dear Cousin,

I have some bad news for you. Uncle John has finally died after his long illness. He was in pain for many months, but now we must be glad for him because his suffering is now over. Please remember him in your prayers. The funeral is to take place on the seventeenth at the Hill View Crematorium at 2.00pm. The service will take place at the chapel of St Paul in Minden, but I will only be too happy to provide you with accomodation here at Fiddler's Creek, before your long journey home.

I know Uncle John always had a soft spot in his heart for you, so I hope you will be able to attend.

Yours, Wilbur Bolees

Editorial

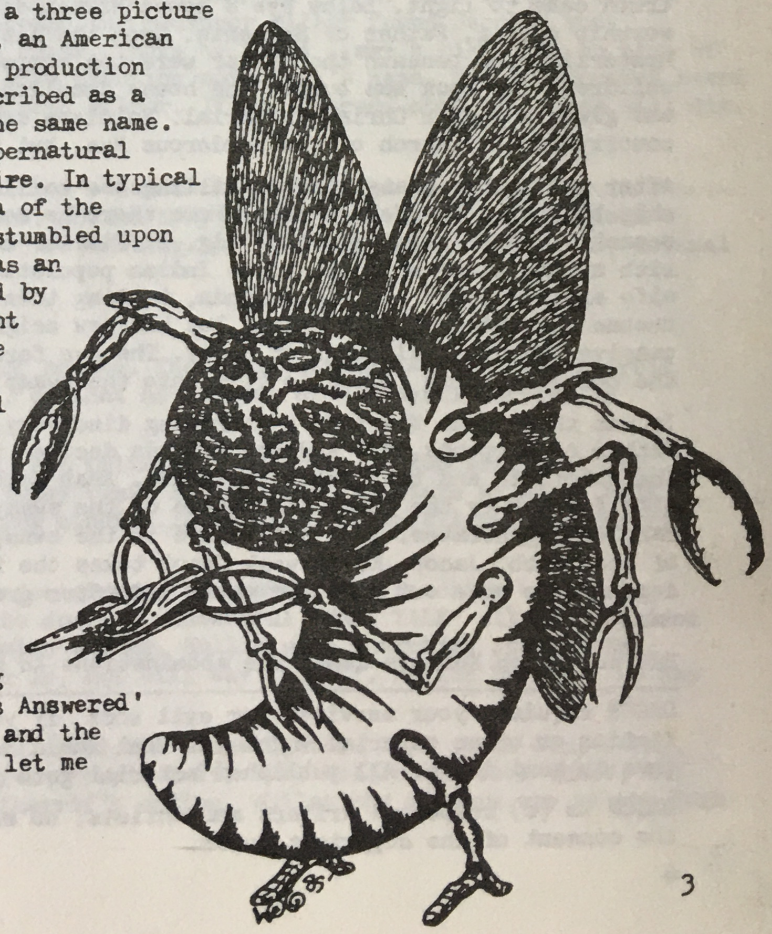
Hello there Cthulhoids, and welcome to issue 7 of DAGON. It seems that the new A5 format is very popular, and I must admit I was quite impressed by the printing and finished product. With the new format comes a price drop to 70p an issue, it seems that this was one of the major factors holding back DAGON. All those subscribers who paid the original five pounds will receive a 15p credit per issue left on their subscription. If the total exceeds the 70p cover price I will add an extra issue to your subscription, I hope that this situation of affairs is convenient with you all.

It seems that the Black Mail lettercol. is quite popular, and I have received a good response to it, I apologise if your letter didn't get printed, but I am afraid there just wasn't the space. Nevertheless do keep those comments crawling in!

A recent visit to Dragonmeet enabled me to meet several correspondants thanks for the chat, unfortunately it appears that several readers didn't know where the fanzine stand was, it was located in a seperate room from the main hall, but I will be at GamesDay so I'll probably see you there.

This issue features the first part of a tale entitled 'The Voice from the Well' if you are the kind of reader who usually skips fiction in fanzines may I say to you don't skip this! The tale is written by Robert J. Curran, an experienced writer of horror fiction and I feel that this addition to the Mythos lists is one of the very best tales of the last few years, providing several new concepts to the Cthulhu lore which I found very worthy. May I say that fiction of this standard rarely surfaces in fanzines so I am extremely proud to have this 'catch' in DAGON...Read it or else... As always contributions are extremely welcome, especially in the fiction and article field, I have enough scenarios for the next three or four issues, so it is quite obvious which form I would prefer contributions to take, artwork is always needed so keep those pics. writhing.

Many, if not all, readers will not have heard of the film producer/director - Fred Olen Ray before. Ray was the man behind an American splatter horror movie entitled 'Scalps' which never found it's way over here. Well enough of the waffle Ray has signed a three picture deal with **TRANS WORLD ENTERTAINMENT**, an American company. The first movie to go into production from this pairing is 'The Tomb' described as a loose adaption of the HPL tale of the same name. The tale features (the film) the supernatural exploits of an Egyptian Female Vampire. In typical cheapy horror movie fashion the idea of the Egyptian angle came about when Ray stumbled upon a left-over set that could be used as an Egyptian tomb, which could be rented by Ray at reduced rates during the night time! Susan Stokey plays the heroine and John Carradine is also on hand. A great film, it most certainly will not be, but I guess I am just a sucker for those cheapo, horror films especially when they stem from the awful backgrounds this one seems to have crawled from. Should be a laugh if nothing else!



Discussion is in the air concerning the possibility of a 'Your Questions Answered' column in DAGON, connected with HPL and the Mythos, not the game of CoC. Please let me know your views.

Carl Ford

The Legacy of Arthur Nye

by Andy Bennison

A 'Call of Cthulhu' adventure for 2-4 investigators, set in Louisiana.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

After the death of Ludvig Prinn, the Flemish authorities did all they could to suppress his evil book 'De Vermis Mysteriis'. Despite the inquisitor's frantic efforts some copies were distributed. One of these esoteric tomes fell into the hands of Arthur Nye, an English country squire.

Arthur was an avid collector of rare and unusual books and had no interest in the dark contents of his latest acquisition. He was more concerned about the book at a later date and making a large profit. Because of the tome's sensitive nature, Arthur hid it in a secret compartment in the wall of his study. He told noone of his secret investment and when he was killed in 1485 at the Battle of Bosworth Field, his secret died with him.

The book remained hidden for many years until it was found by George Nye, a descendent of the original owner. Always unstable at the best of times, transcribing the tome from Latin into English finally titled the balance of George's mind. He craved for more arcane lore and began to associate with the wrong kind of company. Soon people from the surrounding countryside began to disappear. Nye as local magistrate, seemed quite unconcerned. A deputation from the nearest village Halby, demanded that the squire should take steps to capture those responsible. Nye agreed to help, but two days later six members of the deputation also vanished. It was then that the local parson, one Thomas Parry, wrote to the Duke of Norfolk, begging for aid in the matter. The Duke chose to ignore what he considered to be the ravings of a mad priest; but when he heard that Parry also disappeared he sent a bailif to look into the matter. When the bailif failed to report, a company of mercenaries under the command of Sir Robert Morton were sent to arrest George Nye.

When the Duke's men arrived Nye and his friends had fled. It was only then that the truth came to light. Below Nye's house Morton discovered a temple dedicated to the worship of Yig, Father of Serpents. Upon the alter was Arthur's copy of 'De Vermis Mysteriis' and beneath the cellar were the corpses of over forty men, women and children. The book was burnt, the house demolished and the bodies of the dead exhumed and given a proper Christian burial. Soldiers and peasants were sent to scour the countryside in search of the murderous Nye, but he could not be found.

After the rather hasty step of killing the bailif Nye fled the country on a trading ship bound for the West Indies. From there he sailed to the American Colonies in search of other worshippers of Yig. At Fiddler's Creek Nye met Ahab Nebb, a farmer with strong links with the local Indian population. Nye settled down, took an Indian wife and contacted his old friends, telling them to join him. Soon George began to resume with his old activities; but his new neighbours quickly proved to be less passive than the villagers of Halby. The Nye farm was attacked by the mob and the occupants were forced to flee into the swamp to avoid being lynched.

It was there that Nye made a startling discovery; an old temple dedicated to the Father of Serpents. Nye and his friends decided to take up residence there to avoid the colonists and to worship their god. Ahab Nebb agreed to help by supplying them with food. Over the years the people of the swamp began to inbreed resulting in a race of degenerates. They still live in the swamp and are fed by the last decendant of Ahab Nebb, Jacob. Every week Jacob takes the food to the ruins and at night the degenerates come out from the marsh and after grabbing their food, return to the dark temple.

But now Jacob Nebb is dead. The abominations in the marsh are starting to get hungry!

DAGON requires your services for evil work, if you can provide any articles, artwork, fiction or other material which you feel would be suitable for inclusion in DAGON, then do send it in. All published material gets you a free issue.

DAGON is (c) respected writers and artists, no material may be reproduced without the consent of the copyright owner.

INTRODUCING THE PLAYERS

As many campaigns are set in the New England area, it may prove necessary for the players to move south. The following outline can be used to encourage them to visit their cousin Sherrif Wilbur Boley in Louisianna. One Investigator should receive the letter (Player Hand Out).

If the investigators seem hesitant, subtly mention that John may have left them something in his will. John's death has little to do with what is to happen, but it may throw players off the scent to begin with.

At the funeral the players will meet Wilbur, an old aunt, the vicar, John's doctor and a handful of distant relatives and family friends. Should only one person be participating in this scenario, then one of these NPC's may be used as an assistant. After the short service everyone will be invited to the vicarage for tea and sandwiches. Whilst there Wilbur will receive a 'phone call', make his excuses and then leave. He will not let any of the relatives go with him because he has to leave on official business. If the investigators have no transport the vicar will offer them a lift to Wilbur's house after the reception.

THE GOINGS ON AT FIDDLERS CREEK

Jacob Nebb has died of a heart attack. He has been dead for three days, but his body has only just been discovered. Jimmy Cole the delivery boy from Hollin's General Store went to Mr. Nebb's farm with the weekly order. He knocked on the door, but got no reply so he left the shopping on the back door step, and then rode off for a secret meeting with his girlfriend Daisy O'Neil at the Nye ruins. Three of the degenerates were already there waiting for Jacob. They captured the two youngsters and carried them off into the marsh.

Meanwhile, worried about Jimmy, Mr. Hollin telephoned the sherrif at Minden and reported the boy missing. On hearing this Wilbur made straight to Fiddler's Creek, and after a brief interview with Mr. and Mrs. Hollin he left to visit the three farms that Jimmy should have gone to. First of all he went to the Wilkinson Farm, Jimmy it seemed had arrived there earlier than usual. At Jessie Lindley's place, he learnt that Jimmy was in a rush to go somewhere after he had finished his round. Then Wilbur visited Jacob Nebb's shack. Breaking in through the backdoor Wilbur found Jacob's body. Returning, he decided to visit the ruins. There he found Jimmy's bike, but no sign of the boy. He walked to the swamp's edge shouting out Jimmy's name. The degenerates heard the noise and after a struggle captured Wilbur. If not rescued soon all three will die.

THE SEARCH BEGINS....

When the investigators arrive at Wilbur's house they will find it locked and in darkness. There is no sign of anyone. Should they break in, everything will seem undisturbed and normal. Apart from just waiting for Wilbur to return there are several options open to them:-

PLAYERS INFORMATION

Neighbours These will prove to be of no use. They will either say that the sherrif should be at home or at his office, or that he is away at a funeral service in Minden.

Gas Station The somewhat abrasive, but talkative, owner Mr. Mason will tell the investigators that he saw Sherrif Boley visit Hollins General Store at about half past five and then drive south. A few minutes later Mr. Hollin followed the sherrif up the same road.

Hollins General Store The shop is now closed, but persistant knocking will bring a worried looking Mrs. Hollin to the door. A successful 'FAST TALK' will be required before she divulges that Sherrif Bolin and Mr. Hollin were searching for a lost boy, she does not know where Wilbur is, but will say that Mr. Hollin has gone to see Mr. and Mrs. Cole at their farm.

The Cole Farm Mr. and Mrs. Cole will tell the investigators that their son, Jimmy, has disappeared. They are waiting for Sherrif Boley. Mr. Hollin has been there, but he left a few minutes ago for the Sherrif's office. Whilst the players are at the farm

Mr. O'Neil will arrive and demand to know where his daughter is. It will soon be apparant that the Coles and the O'Neils have banned their respective child from seeing eachother. A fight will break out and the investigators will have to stop the parents from seriously hurting eachother.

Sherrif's Office This is also locked and dark. Outside Mr. Hollin is waiting for Sherrif Boley to return. He will prefer to wait here, but he will inform the investigators that the Sherrif went to the three farms on Jimmy's round: The Wilkinson farm, Jessie Lindley's place and Jacob Nebb's shack.

WILKINSON'S FARM

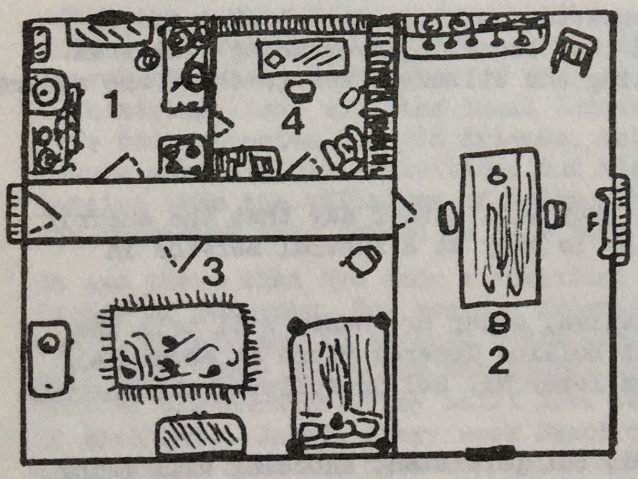
The Wilkinson farm is old and dilapidated. The trees around it are twisted and bent, the whole place has a disquiting air of stale antiquity. As the investigators approach the farm they will be accosted by old man Wilkinson, a farmhand and his dog. The boss of the farm is very abrupt with people at the best of times, and does not like strangers. The Wilkinsons are a bad lot and people with a proper upbringing cross the street to avoid them. Amongst other things they are currently involved with the distilling and shipment of moonshine and Wilkinson will suspect any nosey city folk to be government agents. He will tell nothing and will not even acknowledge Jimmy or Boley's visits. If the players will not get off his land at once, Wilkinson will threaten to set his dog on them. If this fails he will call some of his lads to physically remove the snoopers.

JESSIE LINDLEY'S PLACE

Jessie will be much more helpful. She is getting on a bit and is a little senile. She will be able to tell the investigators that Jimmy had visited her as usual, but had seemed to be in a bit of a rush. Normally he stays for some of Jessie's jam tarts and a chat, but he left early today. She told this to Sherrif Boley, but she can't remember what Jimmy's reason was for leaving early, or at what time he left.

JACOB NEBB'S SHACK

Everything is just had Wilbur had left it. To the left of the house are some derelict stables and a chicken run. Behind it are Jacob's nine cows in a broken down pen. The yard is full of rubbish and is a right mess, several chickens wander around loose. The groceries are still on the back step, although Jacob's goat is noe helping herself to them. The front door is locked, but the back door bangs loudly in the wind.



JACOB NEBB'S SHACK

SCALE

0 4 8

Feet.

1). Kitchen: This is a real tip; dirty plates and pans are stacked everywhere. The cupboards are full of food that has isnce gone off. The room smells foul.

2). Parlour: This hasn't been dusted for months. The curtains have not been opened for ages and this gives the room a musty smell. Furnishings include three chairs, a table, rocking chair, a dresser full of cups and a fireplace.

3). The Bedroom: In the large four poster bed lies the body of Jacob Nebb. Wilbur has drawn the blanket over his head. The room is furnished by a chair, wardrobe and chest of drawers. Underneath the bed is a clothes chest. (The key to which is under the mattress) Inside are 78 dollars and a bankbook, in the names of Nebb and Nye. (George brought many family antiques and jewels over with him). Also here are the deeds to the Nebb land (which includes most of the marsh), and Jacob's accounts. A successful Accountancy roll will inform the investigators that over the last fifty years Jacob has been purchasing about six head of cattle every month. The farm has been making a consistant loss, but money is being used from the joint account to keep it running. There is enough cash left for at least five years before Nebb becomes bankrupt.

4). Study: Apart from a desk, armchair and footstool, this room is packed with books. They cover a wide range of subjects including Geography, Botony and English History. The roof leaks and many of these books have been damaged. On the wall over the desk is a small oil painting of a country house surrounded by trees and fields. A small plaque reads:-

HALBY HOUSE, NORFOLK, 1610.

The painting is by an unknown artist but is worth about 350 dollars. A spot hidden object roll will find the following old manuscript beneath a pile of books on Greek mythology. It is handwritten and consists of a collection of papers with the opening title reading:-

YE WORKES OF LUDVIG PRINN AND OTHER GRATE SCHOLARS OF REPUTE, AS TRANSCRIBED INTO ENGLISHE BY GEORGE NYE, SQUIRE OF HALBY, 1613.

It is to all intents and purposes an inferior version of 'De Vermis Mysteriis', as penned by Nye. It is very difficult to read and a Read English roll at -40% must be made to understand it. See page 61 of the CoC rulesbook for information regarding second editions. Sanity loss for reading the tome is 1D8, Cthulhu Mythos +8%
Spells: Summon Star Vampire, Bind Star Vampire.

THE RUINS

The Nye ruins are easily visible from the road leading to Jacob Nebb's shack. Any local will tell the investigators that the ruins are of a house once owned by a warlock. About 25% of them will know that his name was Nye.

On arrival, Jimmy's bike and Wilbur's car can be clearly seen. Neither appear to have been tampered with. A Spot Hidden roll will be needed to locate some small pieces of ripped, white cloth. (If the Coles were asked what their son was wearing they will confirm that Jimmy wore a white shirt). A footpath can be seen leading towards the marsh. There are footprints visible in the mud, but they cannot be identified.

As the investigators walk along the path they may find three more clues if a successful Spot Hidden Object roll is made (roll once for each clue).

a). A shoe (one of Jimmy's).
b). Wilbur's gun, a .45 automatic (with four bullets in the chamber). The gun was dropped into the mud during the struggle and if the barrel is not cleared out the gun will jam.
c). There is some blood on the grass. (One of Wilbur's bullets hit a degenerate. A Cthulhu Mythos roll if successful will tell the investigators that it comes from a minor creature (Class 1).

INTO THE MARSH

Any local will warn about the dangers of entering Fiddler's Marsh. It is an eerie place and strange noises can be heard emanating from the vicinity at night. It is cold, damp and clammy; filled with twisted trees, stunted bushes and rotting vegetation. If that wasn't bad enough menacingly evil alligators lurk in the middle of the marsh, but they will not attack unless they or their young are threatened.

The alligators main function is to scare rather than eat the investigators, but if they insist upon aggravating the marsh's denizens then the investigators deserve all that they get. The following stats. are suggested:-

ALLIGATORS

STR.	3d6+3	(Average 13-14)	HIT POINTS: 13-14
CON.	3d6+3	" 13-14	MOVE: 7
SIZ.	4d6+3	" 17	ATTACK: By Bite 45% Dam 1d10+1d6
POW.	3d6	" 10-11	ARMOUR: 1 point skin.
DEX.	1d8+1	" 5-6	
INT.	1d3	" 2	

Once inside the marsh there is a 20% chance per. hour of the investigators losing their sence of direction. (This is doubled at night). Small deformed frogs are everywhere and they never cease their demented croaking. Anyone spending their first night in Fiddler's Marsh must make a sanity roll or lose 1d3 points of SAN.

AMOS THE HUNTER

Amos is the only person mad enough to actually live in the marsh. He uses a little rowboat to reach dry land. Hunting alligators is illegal in this state, but that doesn't stop Amos. Boley knows what the Indian is up to, but he has no proof, and doesn't fancy going into the marsh to find some. He is very suspicious of outsiders: "Wa' da ya wan'?" "Go on naw git!" - A FAST TALK or some alcohol will gain Amos's trust: "At neet I hears a yappin' an' a hollerin' leek a dawg. But thar ain't be no dawgs in Fiddlers Marsh". However he will not join the players in their search, but he will tail them to see if they are telling the truth.

Amos is always armed with a bowie knife and a 20 gauge shotgun which he fires at 55%. He has only one arm, but this does not affect his 'to hit' roll, although reloading takes him twice the normal time. His left arm was bitten off at the elbow by a hungry alligator. When he was a boy his father would use him as alligator bait by fastening a rope around his son's waist and throwing him in. Amos gets great pleasure from watching his listeners squirm as he graphically describes his ordeal. This coupled with his stature, obvious parentage and lifestyle make an encounter with Amos rather unnerving.

His main function is to help the party if they get into real trouble. If the investigators look like being wiped out, have Amos appear with his shotgun.

(The charcter of Amos comes from the song 'AMOS MOSES' by the SENSATIONAL ALEX HARVEY BAND).

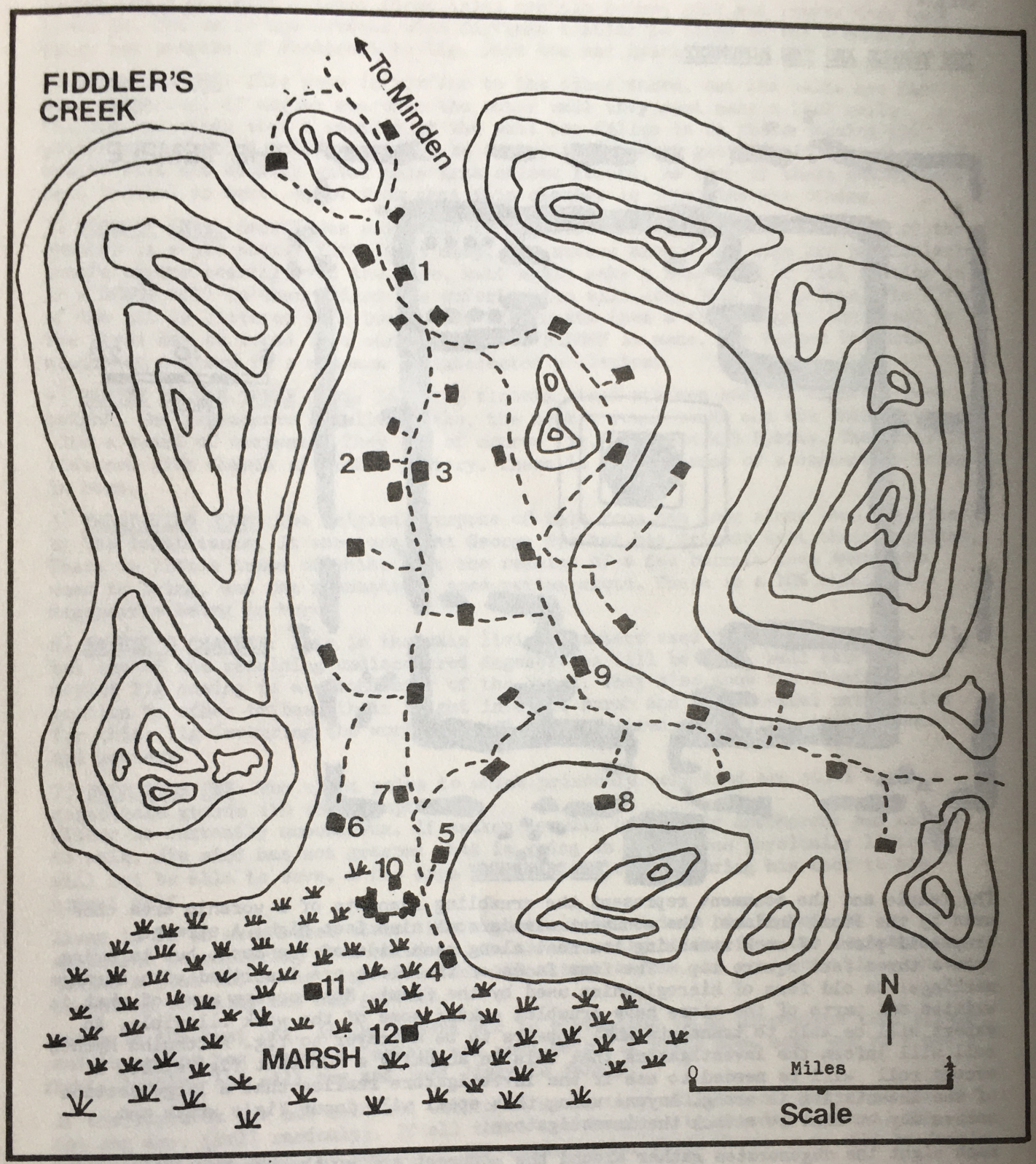
THE DEGENERATES (Lesser Independant Race)

STR.	3d6	Average 10-11	MOVE: 9		
CON.	3d6	" 10-11	WEAPON	by Claw	and Bite
SIZ.	3d6-2	" 8-9	ATTACK	25%	20%
INT.	1d6	" 3-4	DAMAGE	1d3	1d2
POW.	2d6	" 7	ARMOUR	None	
DEX.	3d6+1	" 11-12	SPELLS	None	

HIT POINTS 10-11

Sanity loss 1d6 if roll fails. There is no San. loss for successful roll.

Description: Degenerates are disgusting inbred humans. Stunted and deformed, their faces are dog-like and they communicate through grunts and growls. They use no weapons or armour. Their bodies are either naked or they wear the remnants of old rags. Their bodies are covered with scabs and sores.



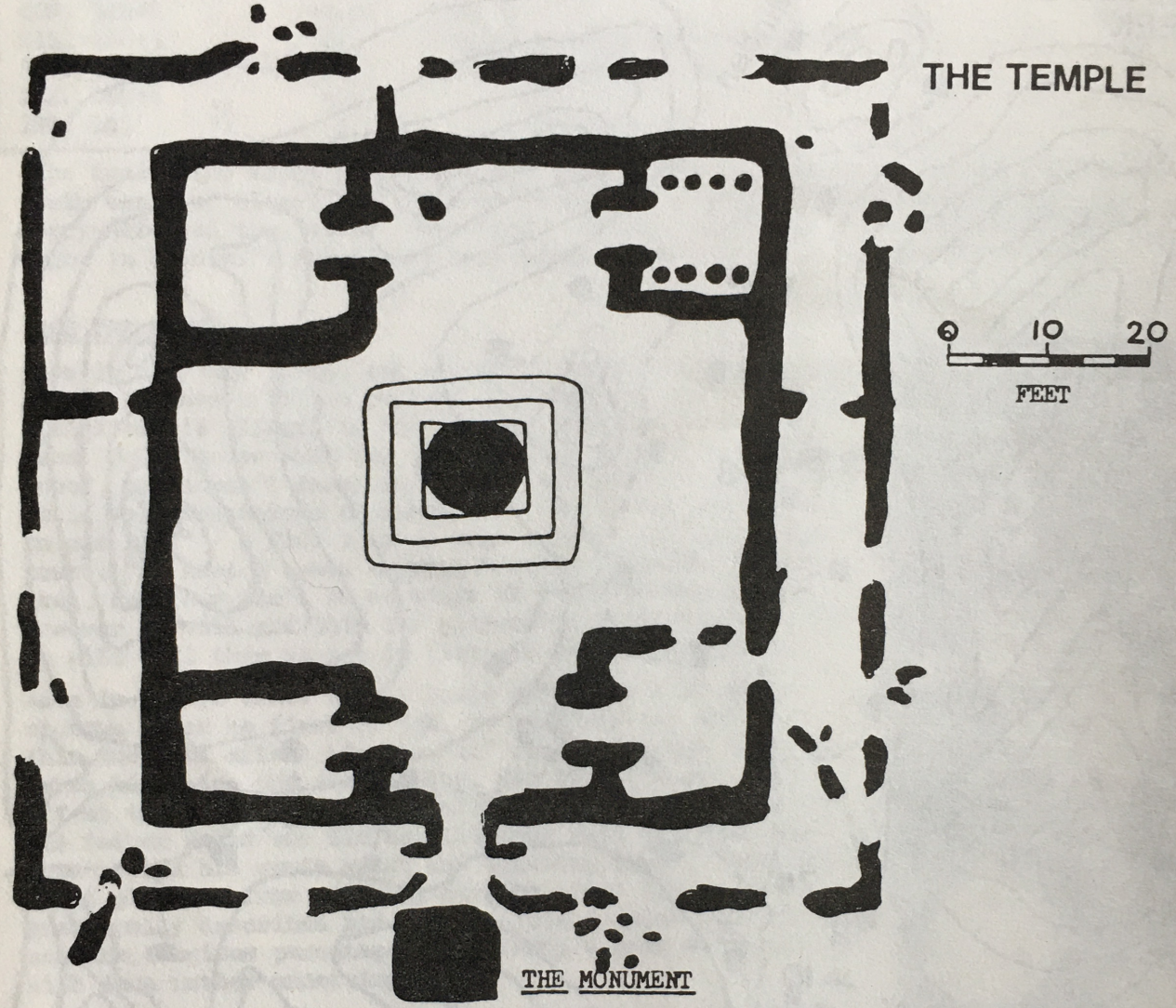
Contour Lines are at 50 ft. intervals.

KEY

1) WILBUR'S HOUSE
2) HOLLIN'S GENERAL STORE
3) THE GAS STATION
4) JACOB NEBB'S SHACK
5) JESSIE LINDLEY'S PLACE
6) THE WILKINSON FARM
7) THE COLE FARM
8) THE O'NEIL FARM
9) SHERIFF'S OFFICE
10) THE RUINS OF THE NYE FARM
11) AMOS'S SHACK
12) THE TEMPLE

Notes: There are between three and six degenerates left in the marsh, (vary the number according to the size and experience of the party). At night there is a 30% chance that 1d3 of them will be wandering the marshes, the rest will be at the temple.

THE TEMPLE AND THE MONUMENT



THE MONUMENT

The Temple and the monument represent the crumbling remnants of a worship area once used by the Ptami Indians. The monument stands some nine feet high; A strange trapezoid piece of rock measuring ten feet along each side of the base, but tapering upto a three feet square top. The four faces of the block are inscribed with strange markings: an old form of hieroglyphics used by the Ptami. Moss covers most of what is written and parts of the stone have crumbled making some of the work illegible. An expert will be able to translate what appears to be a prayer to Yig. A Cthulhu Mythos roll will inform the investigators that this is actually a 'Contact Yig' spell. A second roll will be needed to see if the investigators realise that a large section of the incantation is wrong. Anyone using this spell will incur Yig's wrath and snakes may be sent to attack the investigators.

Each night the degenerates gather around the monument and go through the motions of their ancestor's worship of Yig. They gather round the stone and shout out their praises to the serpent god. Anyone hearing this awful cocophony of noise will lose 1d3 San. unless a successful roll is made.

The temple's inner chambers are still intact and are used as living quarters by the degenerates. The outer chambers have not fared so well; sections of the walls and roof have caved in. Moss and ivy like vine grow everywhere. The moss is slippery and covers up dangerous pieces of masonery.

1) THE OUTER CHAMBERS : These three areas contain broken rock and leaves that have blown in. The walls are covered with carvings similar to those on the monument. (They are prayers of obedience to Yig, Dark Han and Byatis.

2) OUTER CHAMBER: This room is similar to the other three, but the walls are far more dangerous, if anyone searches the outer wall they must make a LUCK roll. Failure indicates that a section of the wall has fallen in on them, causing 1d6 points of damage. A DODGE roll must be attempted to avoid getting hit. The degenerates will not usually enter this area unless forced, as some of their number have been injured in here. Apart from that this chamber is just like the others.

3) WORSHIP AREA: Sacrifices were made to Yig here many years ago. The centre of the chamber is a pit nearly fifty feet deep. The stones around the edge are particularly unsafe anyone peering over the edge, must again make a LUCK roll or risk falling in, if a DODGE roll is then failed the unfortunates will lose 3d10 hit points. The floor of the pit is littered with bones, but underneath them a stone dagger once used by the Ptami may be found if a successful SPOT HIDDEN is made. The dagger is worth about 400 dollars to a museaum or interested collector.

4) SHRINE TO THE THREE GODS: In three alcoves stand statues each of eighteen inch height. One represents a coiled snake, the next a young woman and the third a man with a beard of serpents. They are of course Yig, Dark Han and Byatis. The floor is littered with shards of broken pottery. There is a 20% chance of a degenerate being in here.

5) MEDITATION ROOM: The original purpose of this room has long since been forgotten by the inhabitants. It was here that George Nye and his friends kept their supplies. There is little trace of this: just the remains of a few barrels that Ahab Nebb used to bring, and the remnants of some rotten cloth. There is a 10% chance of a degenerate being in here.

6) PRIEST'S CHAMBER: This is the main living quarters used by the degenerates. All but one of the remaining undiscovered degenerates will be here. Wall carvings depict Yig coming to a witchdoctor of the Ptami. They also show the Ptami's persecution by other tribes, their flight into the marsh and the eventual retribution for this: Yig devouring the world. The floor is smeared with filth, broken bones and pottery.

7) SACRIFICE PEN: The eight poles to which prisoners were tied are still here, a degenerate guards the three captives.
Wilbur is currently unconcious. If awaken he will be totally incoherent and unable to walk. His mind has not grasped what is going on and unless physically lifted he will not be able to move. A few days hospitalisation will bring him back to his normal self.

Jimmy is in an even worse state. His experience has driven him insane. At the moment he is suffering from paranoia. He is currently hiding from the degenerates behind a post but he is very weak. He will attack anyone who goes near him with the exception of Daisy and his parents.

Daisy is the best off. At the moment she is pretending to be unconcious like Wilbur and is spying her chance to escape and seek help. If resue does come she will not fight, instead she will try and lead Jimmy to safety.

If the captives are not released within 24 hours they will be eaten at the rate of one per day. (Roll randomly). If all three are devoured by the degenerates, the degenerates will start to terrorise the countryside. Their first stop will be Jessie Lindley's place.

A successful recue of the prisoners and neutralisation of the degenerates will give the investigators an extra d8 sanity minus one point for each captive killed, although the total will not go below zero.

DAGON costs 70p per issue. Unfortunately all back issues are now sold out, a 6 issue subscription costs £4.20 from:

CARL FORD, 11 WARWICK ROAD, TWICKENHAM, MIDDLESEX TW2 6SW (cheques payable to C. Ford)

LIBRARY INFORMATION

The nearest library is in the town of Minden, so this line of investigation will not be open unless the party decides to split up, or ask someone else (like the vicar) to do it. If the investigators decide to research into specific events, or people a library roll will be required to learn each piece of information.

The War of the Roses by W. Miles.

Mentions Arthur Nye and his death at the battle of Bosworth. Information is limited to a short paragraph which says that he was a squire of Halby and that he fought in the Duke of Norfolk's contingent.

The Purge of the British Witches by Robert Fenton.

This will give background information on George Nye and the horrors that occured at Halby House. No mention of 'De Vermis Mysteriis' is made, but the part played by the Duke of Norfolk is given under emphasis. The author conjectures that Nye fled to France.

Forgotten Tribes by Alan and Elizabeth Ballard.

Gives information on the Ptami tribe. It says that they were exterminated by the Karatarshi tribe allied to a group of colonists. The last battle was said to have taken place near Minden on the edge of the Marsh. In passing the authors say that the Ptami worshipped Quetzalcoatl.

Before Salem by David Ash.

Ash's book gives accounts of American witch trials up to 1692. In a chapter on Louisianna, Ash mentions Nye, although no account of his previous activities in England are given. The testimony of a farmer called Luke Millar tells how the mob attacked the farm after two girls had disappeared. Inside the house they found statues of Satan (in his snake form) and other paraphanalia of demon worship, along with the bodies of the girls. The house was burnt to the ground and it was thought that Nye and his family perished too. Ash later mentions that the victimisation of one Ahab Nebb and his trial. He was accused of having been involved with Nye, but was found not guilty. Reading of all of this book will increase the characters OCCULT skill by 5%.

Other Books.

Several slim volumes of local history can be found without the use of a Library Roll. Most will mention the Nye house, but they will only state that the house was owned by a suspected warlock and that it was destroyed by a mob.

Character List	Str.	Con.	Siz.	Int.	Pow.	Dex.	App.	Edu.	San.	Age.	H.P.
Sherrif Boley	14	12	9	14	16	12	13	10	61	46	11
Vicar	9	11	15	11	8	9	15	15	38	37	13 (6)
Mr. Mason	10	8	12	10	9	11	7	11	39	54	10
Mrs. Hollin	8	6	9	11	11	9	10	12	39	72	8
Mr. Cole	13	12	13	8	9	12	8	6	35	36	13
Mrs. Cole	11	11	13	12	7	6	9	9	31	38	13
Mr. O'Neil	10	10	11	9	7	14	10	11	26	44	11
Mr. Hollin	6	8	7	13	10	8	16	9	41	67	8
Wilkinson	13	12	12	11	8	10	11	11	33	66	12
Farmhand	16	14	14	10	7	10	12	4	28	27	14
Jessie Lindley	5	9	8	10	6	8	11	9	15	78	9
Amos	14	17	16	11	15	9	6	5	40	50	17
Jimmy Cole	11	14	12	9	11	10	14	9	40	14	13 (5)
Daisy O'Neil	9	12	11	13	12	10	12	11	43	16	12 (8)
Wilkinson's Dog	12	9	7	2	8	14	(Bite 30% 1d6 + 1)				13

The figures in brackets represent current Hit Points.
As always Keepers are at liberty to alter the stats to suit their adventure.

COMPUTERISING CTHULHU

computer program for Keepers by Marcus L. Rowland

I became interested in role playing games and computers at roughly the same time, and my first programs were simple character generators and gaming aids for 'Traveller' and other RPG's. However, I've gradually decided that most computerised game aids are more trouble than they are worth. Since most of my examples don't come from CoC, I won't give details; suffice to say that most possible problems include inflexibility, errors, rule changes, and the stupidity of the programmer (me) and users. By and large, most Game Aid Programs (GAP's) suffer from some or all of these snags, plus the fundamental disadvantage of being less portable and more inaccessible than a rule-book, dice and calculator.

By most standards CoC has remarkably simple rules, and there isn't any need for a sophisticated number cruncher to resolve combat, sanity and the use of skills. The only complex area is character generation, and the number of choices that can be made makes it difficult to write an appropriate computer program. Let's summarise the different methods:

First Edition, normal generation. The character allocates 10 x EDU to professional skills, 5 x INT to any skills.

First Edition, prior experience system (in sourcebook). Skills are allocated on a 5-year term system (similar to 'Traveller' and resembling the system used in 'Ringworld'. Discarded from all subsequent printings.

First Edition, with Cthulhu Companion modifications. Skills are allocated as in normal generation, but additional skills are available, based on other characteristics; for example, 3 x APP in communications skills. This system was supposed to be used in the second edition rules, but never appeared.

Second Edition, normal generation. The character allocates 15 x EDU to professional skills, 5 x INT to any skills.

In addition to these major changes, revisions have included changes in the way characteristics are rolled, base levels of different skills, the change of CHA to APP, and the availability of new skills with each new rules revision.

The computer program following is designed to produce characteristics and the skill points available from these different systems (except the prior experience system), without allocating the points to any particular skill. I use it to generate the stats. for NPC's but wouldn't like to use it for PC's. Rolling the dice is much more fun. It also includes a short routine which generates a calendar for any month between the years 1900 to 2100. The program was written in Microsoft Basic on a TRS-80 Model 1 computer, and has been tested on other machines. The TRS-80 uses several functions which are not common to all machines;

PRINT CHR$ (23) forces a double-width printing mode.
CLS clears the screen, countermands PRINT CHR$ (23).

! is an exponential function.

PRINT USING is a formatting command, which ensures that numbers are printed right-justified.

ON CH GOTO allows the computer to go to one or another of several possible lines. Computers lacking in this function should use IF CH= ..... etc.

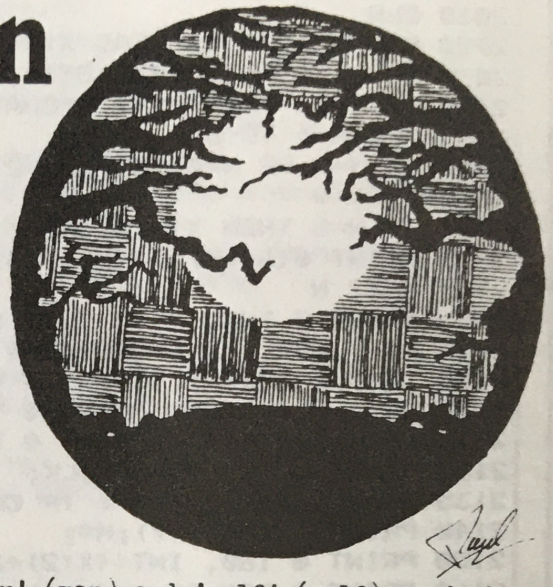
' is used instead of REM if outside quote marks.

TRS-80 users should note that spaces have been added to line 1180 to inprove clarity and that all other spaces (other than those inside the quote marks) should be omitted when this line is entered, since it is too long to run on a TRS-80 with the spaces included. This problem may affect some other computers.

FINAL NOTE; After writing this article I was reminded that the TRS-80 computer uses a slightly odd method of locating PRINT positions on its screen. The screen consists of 16 lines of 64 columns, with print positions numbered from 0 to 1023. Divide the print position by 64 to get the line number, use the remainder to get the column number. PRINT at 645 thus translates as PRINT at line 10, column 5. If this isn't clear blame TANDY, not me!

'Ware the Moon

by PAUL NEWMAN



Thanks to the celluloid screen and a host of modern tales of horror, Werwolves have come under a great deal of misconception. They are neither the illegitimate sons of mute servants and beggars ('Curse of the Werewolf'- Hammer 1961), nor are they doomed creatures of the moon.

Here then are a few facts on Werwolves, their social lives, habits and powers. I hope that it clears up some of the mess that has been made in the past.

WHAT IS A WERWOLF?

The term Werwolf comes from the Anglo-Saxon 'wer' (man) and 'wulf' (wolf), and throughout history belief in them has spread across Britain, France, Germany, Spain, the Balkans, Belgium, The Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Iceland, Lapland, Finland, Russia and Siberia. Virtually without exception, every culture in the world has at sometime fostered a belief in Werwolves. So what are they?

There are in fact three types of Werwolf: the Lycanthrope, the wolf man and the true Werwolf.

The Lycanthrope is perhaps to be pitied more than the others. Lycanthropy is a recognised medical condition in which the victim believes himself to be a wolf. This condition is not merely the whim of a particular turn of mind, but one in which the victim believes himself to truly be a beast. He will think in terms of a wolf, will act like one in eating and social habits and, like most diseases of schizophrenia, will know nothing of this side of his personality in his normal everyday life.

The wolfman is a fairly familiar character to most of us who haunt the late night screenings of horror films. He is typified by Lon Chaney Jnr., a portrayal long held as the norm and one which has done irrepairable damage to our perceptions of this creature. Although folklore occasionally mentions this type, it is essentially the creation of Hollywood and has very little to do with the true werwolf.

The werwolf is, however, a much more complex creature, and one which is deeply rooted in many cultures. It is bound by few of the Hollywood rules which so afflict it's bastardised offspring, the Wolfman. In appearance it could not be more different than the other two. It is essentially a normal wolf, save that it is nearly twice as large, it's teeth are abnormally long and sharp, and it has the ability to walk upright, should it wish to do so.

It is this latter that is the most often accounted in folklore, of the three. As the most plausible, and appropriate to CoC, it is this type that I shall be looking at.

HOW TO BECOME A WERWOLF

There are two ways of becoming a werwolf, by contact and by ritual.

Contact is obvious. The virus which gives the Werwolf it's powers course through the blood and saliva. There are several options here. A person will become infected and thus a werwolf, if he is bitten by a werwolf, eats the flesh of a beast slayed by a werwolf, if his parent(s) is infected, if he drinks water from a werwolf's footprint, or if he is unfortunate enough to drink downstream from where a werwolf is drinking.

The ritual to become a werwolf is somewhat eccentric, even by ritual standards, but what is printed below is the genuine thing, so take care!

Such an individual who wishes to become a werwolf must take himself off to a remote spot not frequented by men, for example woods, mountain tops & deserts.

On a night when the moon is new and strong the would-be werwolf must find a clear space and, using chalk or string, must make a circle no less than seven feet in radius, and within that one another of three feet radius. He must then kindle a fire within the smaller circle, and place over the flames an iron tripod and a vessel of water, into which must be cast three of the following: Asafoetida, Parsley, Opium,

Hemlock, Henbane, Saffron, Aloe, Poppy-seed, or Solanum.

As these are added to the pot the following words must be repeated:-

Spirits from the deep
who never sleep
Be kind to me

Spirits from the grave
Without a soul to save
Be kind to me

Spirits of the trees
That grow upon the leas
Be kind to me

Spirits of the air
Foul and black, not fair
Be kind to me

Water spirits hateful
To ships and bathers fateful
Be kind to me

Spirits of earthbound dead
That glide with noiseless tread
Be kind to me

Spirits of heat and fire
Destructive in your ire
Be kind to me

Spirits of cold and ice
Patrons of crime and vice
Be kind to me

Wolves, vampires, satyres, ghosts!
Elect of all the devilish hosts!
I pray you send hither,
Send hither, send hither,
The great grey shape that makes men shiver!
Shiver, shiver, shiver!
Come! Come! Come!

GRJ 85

The supplicant next strips, and smears his entire body with the fat of a newly killed cat mixed with aniseed, camphor and opium. He then binds round his loins a girdle made from a wolf's pelt. Kneeling down, he waits for the manifestation of the Great Wolf Spirit. This spirit is fairly inconsistant in the way in which it makes it's presence known. Sometimes it is in the form of a spectral hunter, or a monstrosity somewhere between man and wolf. Most often it is simply an unnatural silence, or crashes and shriekings. Should the supplicant be acceptable he will be bestowed with "the gift".

Contrary to popular belief the werwolf is not a victim dreading the phases of the moon, although these are the periods when the wolf instinct reaches it's peak and in which it is impossible not to change. Normally speaking, the werwolf is a shape-shifter - that is to say it can change from man to beast and back again whenever it pleases.

In CoC it is best to use normal stats for the werwolf when in human form, and alter the stats according to the sourcebook, included with the rules when in the form of a wolf.

MANORCON is to be held July 19th-21st at the Birmingham University (High Hall). Contact Richard Walkerdine, 144 Stoughton Road, Guildford, Surrey for further details.

WERWOLF SOCIETY

Werwolf society is as rigid and as well ordered as that of their cousins, the ordinary wolf. With one exception, which is also noted below, they tend to form themselves into packs or clans. These vary in size from between three and fifty. However, packs of more than ten to fifteen are rare in areas frequented by man, and are more often found in the wastes of the world. Despite the varying sizes of pack, there are always four distinct divisions in Werwolf society.

Loner The loner is a sad individual in that it is an outcast from both the society of man and that of the werwolf. These are either leaders who have been dismissed from a pack if it has failed to meet a challenge from one of the younger members, male or female (Werwolf packs are very egalitarian as regards female rights - the female is more often the deadlier of the species!); or they are victims of a werwolf attack who inadvertantly survive and are subsequently rejected by the pack, i.e. if food is already scarce.

The Loner tends to live fairly close to humanity because they are easy prey for one either old or alone. A young werwolf as a result of an attack, skulks around centres of human settlement in an attempt to remedy it's terrible lonliness.

Initiate In the pack system the Initiate is lowest in the "packing order". They are the new werwolves, either produced through ritual or reproduction within the pack. Because they are so unskilled, they take the part in hunting, and generally have duties concerned with food preparation or learning the Pack Lore (more on this later).

Hunter This is the Werwolf in it's prime. Young and at the peak of it's powers, it is the hunters who are the most numerous within the pack. They are concerned with pack defence and hunting, as well as ensuring that their breeding keeps the pack numbers healthy. It is this element of the pack that the investigators are most likely to encounter, unless they are unlucky enough to stumble upon a pack's lair!

The Hunter leads a very energetic and active life, and their appearance shows this. Their coats are always glossy and sleak and, though varying in colour, tend to be black, deep brown or snowy white. The white wolf is a rarity among packs and one born as such will be treated as a gift of good fortune from the Great Wolf spirit.

Elder The Elder is, as the name suggests, the most senior of the pack. Few werwolves actually reach this status dur to inter-pack warring and the day to day perils met, not the least of which are snooping investigators!

The Elders are of a high status in the pack, and are revered by the others as the keepers of the sacred Pack Lore. This is the "bible" of the pack - it's history, heroes, martyrs, and most importantly the legend of the Great Wolf spirit.

The Elders have the decisive say in who is pack leader and choose from all comers who will benefit the pack the most. A successful challenge for the leadership is never re-contested.

HOW TO KILL A WERWOLF

Werwolves have a very tough constitution and strength, thus, while absorbing normal damage, they are virtually impervious to normal weapons.

The most effective weapon against werwolves is silver. The reason for this has come under dispute many times, but it is commonly believed that silver contains certain properties which react with the virus in the werwolf's body, creating a deadly poison which is fatal within seconds if a vital area is hit. Silver weapons may take any form, although bullets are inevitably best - one doesn't have to get too close to the werwolf, as with a knife, for it to be effective.

Fire is a useful weapon against werwolves, but only if they are in their lupine state when animal instincts take over.

Be warned.... many werwolves know of man's gullibility and will often play dead when hit with normal weapons, awaiting a better chance to leap up and devour the hapless dupe.

Much has been made over the centuries of exorcism, particularly with relevance to werwolves, but it should be pointed out that this is worse than useless. As the cult of thw werwolf predates christianity by several centuries its diety, the Great Wolf spirit, is unconcerned with such abstact ideas as God. Thus his children are unaffected by invocations of the almighty or blessed artifacts, (unless these are silver).

So remember, as next you stroll up that empty rural lane, or take a refreshing moonlight meander across the moors or through the woods, ... was that just a farm dog you heard a few minutes back howling so terribly? Was it really just your imagination that something is padding behind you on TWO feet? Or is it really... Well, shouldn't you turn round and see? Perhaps it would be better to run like the devil's at your heels, or else.....

Editor:- I would just like to point out to any would be Mary Whitehouse's amongst DAGON readership that the above article shouldn't be taken too seriously, and would like to stress that we are not trying to convert anyone (or thing for that matter) to any types of diabolical practises whatsoever! .... NEXT ISSUE .. 'Selling your soul to Satan' - in 666 steps, by B. L. Zeebub.

DR. PHIBES PRESCRIBES

OUT OF THE MIST Price 60p, 48pp. A5 format. A new zine rising from the ashes of SHADOWFIRE & MYSTIC CRYSTAL, I must say that the result is pretty impressive and issue 1 contains 'Seaguard' an introduction to OOTM's campaign world, a preview of the new JUDGE DREDD RPG, A scenario for RINGWORLD, figure review of CoC miniatures, articles on 'The Eoten' giants, Life and Death, some fantasy fiction and news. A very worthy addition to the fanzine field. Available from Jason Kingsley, 72, Main Street, Osgathorpe, LEICS LE12 9TA (During College Holidays) or St. John's College Oxford OX1 3JP (Term time).

DEAD ELF issue 5, Price 45p, 32pp. A5 format. Contains reviews, fiction, Asterix book reviews, a T&T solo, 'Goblin' fantasy game, Asterix RPG, Lettercol and chat. An average zine, which covers some of the minority games which is worth a look. From: Andrew Fisher, 2 The Limes, Hitchin, Herts SG5 2AY.

BORIS Price 40p, 20pp. A5. A new zine Co-edited by Chris Preist and Dave Murray, another of the alternative zines, designed to provoke thought and discussion rather than act as another boring playaid. Includes an article on systemless roleplaying, a systemless scenario, a rather pointless article on 'Beauty and Hair Care in AD&D which I'll take as a joke - but which isn't very funny!, an intro to a postal campaign, a look at hobby horrorscopes (sic), and some imaginary film review of 'Revenge of the Bunnymen' which again seems a waste of space, the best part of the zine is the Paul Mason interview which provides a little more info. on that infamous hobby personality. But I feel that despite the fact that Boris is original and certainly doesn't take it'self seriously it certainly is not the kind of zine that you can't afford to be without. I suspect that it will get good reviews amongst most 'Hobby' members since the editors are undoubtedly well known to them. From: Chris Preist, 55 Exwich Hill, Exeter, Devon EX4 2AW.

DRUNE KROLL Price 45p, issue 2, 40pp A5 format. Despite the poor layout this zine contains a nice mix of RPG material ranging from Car Wars to AD&D, there are also 'Smiths' album review, zine reviews, and short fiction the print is clear and once again is worth buying if you intend to read more than 6 zines. From: Justin Horrell, Sunnybank, Southall Garage, Reynoldston, Swansea SA3 1AN.

THE FIERY CROSS issue 5, 40pp. A5 format. This little zine is turning out to be very good. The latest issue continues to improve on previous efforts, with some clear, crisp printing which is presented along with articles on Star Trek the RGG, religion in FRP, The Vikings part 2, a very short 'Bodycount' scenario, reviews of Warhammer, zines, figures an introduction to the world of Comics which is quite good, film reviews which are not out of date!, a look at Villainous organisations in Superpowered RPG's which is interesting, a look at Law in FRP and more. Tom has put a very good issue together and it shouls provide a worthwhile read to most if not all gamers, get it! From: Tom Stacey, The Mill House, Rays Hill, Hawridge, Nr. Chesham, Bucks HP5 2UJ. It costs the very low sum of 60p incl. P&P.

PSYCHOPATHY by Alan Jeffrey

The darkness clawed at their souls as the small group groped it's way through the cavern. The flaslight's beam swang from side to side, illuminating little but bare rock, until they turned the corner. Before them stood hunched a being of indescribable horror, a blasphemous half insectoid, half baboon-like....

Before the Keeper could finish the description, two fingers squeezed two triggers simultaniously and two AK47 bullets found their mark, converting the inhuman amalgram of nightmares into an inhuman mess on the floor.

"A Dimensional Shambler, I think. Pathetic - not even worth a place in the photo-album. Oh damn - Jim's gone catatonic again. Leave him here, if he's still here when we get back (ha ha), we'll take him back to the boat. You and You - you're NPC cannon fodder, you can stay behind and look after him - here's a shotgun each - if anything huge and monstrous eats you, shoot it. If you can't manage that, just scream horribly and pray a lot".

Irvings, right?

Power-playing loonies not even worth contempt, right?

Nope!

This is in fact, as well as I can remember, an episode from the life of Jaques Poirot my favourite investigator, even if I didn't think he'd survive his first scenario and so gave him a silly name. This little parable is supposed to make two points.

One: never, ever run the second scenario from 'Shadows of Yog-Sothoth', as any PC worth his salt will loot the bad guys armoury before dynamiting it, and land themselves with a whole load of modern assault rifles. Also, the PC's will realise that there is a future sixty years ahead in time, and therefore will have little to worry about from the raising of R'lyeh.

Two: by the time an investigator has survived 15 scenarios, he is going to be a paranoid, psychpathic lunatic. San. loss? San. loss can be damned. It's the only way to stay alive. Shoot first, ask questions later. Don't trust anyone but your friend. Yes, a friend. Yes, pick a friend who you can trust to do open heart surgery upon you in the dark. It doesn't matter what he used to be, he's your friend now. Anyone else is cannon fodder. Book reading material. Fish fingers for Nyarlathotep. Don't tell them anything - they could be Cthonians in disguise as far as you know.

Okay, slow down Alan, relax, back to normal, not Poirot-speak.

Y'see folks this is what CoC leads to - the fate of the world resting in the hands of a few, dedicated, persevering maniacs with 100% Assault Rifle. And you know something, it's not such a bad style of play, really. It's just completely different from "normal" CoC. Suddenly through sheer firepower, the PC's are almost as powerful as their opposition, and so the PC's have to become corespondingly subtle. Thus the game becomes a massive game of bluff and counter-bluff. Trust noone, use your brains and when the worst comes to the worst and you're in a fight, remeber - shoot first shoot well and use the other PC's as cannon fodder, that's what they're there for. You and your friend are the nucleus of the group, that's why you've got the A47's and they don't.

Another thing - all these scenarios which start "You as a famous investigator of the occult, are contacted by...". You know what that means don't you? A cry for help? Rubbish! It means Trap. "A famous investigator". A famous investigator?" "A famous investigator" is a dead "investigator". Next you'll be getting letters saying "Dear famous investigator, please find enclosed one (1) Cthonian, causing a force 3 earthquake and a 20 point Shriving. Let's see you shoot your way out of this one".

Remember, it's the cultists who should stand out like a sore thumb. The first thing they should know about your presence is the trail of bodies you leave to make your arrival and departure. And this rubbish about scouting ahead, in the back of the book. If anything were ever written by a cultist infiltrator, this is it. When you arrive, you arrive in force. Send a scout in, and they know you're coming. They'll probably torture the poor soul and find out your names and addresses as well, so you can forget about running, unless you want to meet a Shoggoth back at your department.

Got the gist?

Yep. A sane investigator is a raving lunatic who you shouldn't trust a nanometer. Thing is, he's on your side. Remember that when you're caught in the explosion intended for a Great Old One. Thank god he's a good guy...just think what it would be like if he was a cultist.

Editor's Introduction

The following tale is written by an author of whom many readers of DAGON will not have heard of before, his name is Robert J. Curran. Despite this fact may I say that Robert is certainly no stranger to the field of Mythos fiction. Several of Robert's contributions in this area appeared in print in the 70's in such notable publications as 'Whispers' and the British fanzine 'Weird Window'. Robert now works as a University lecturer in Ireland and regularly contributes to a late night series of horror tales aired by Belfast Radio Station.

The following tale is set in Bob's 'own' Mythos community - the backwood Cheat Mountain Country (or Nooseneck Country as some locals call it). I will not give any of the plot away here, suffice to say that the story includes references to several of Robert's own additions to the Cthulhu Mythos as well as providing additional Mythos lore which readers will be unfamiliar with. So without further ado may I suggest that you bolt your doors, latch those windows and turn up the lights as DAGON proudly presents the first installment of:-

The Voice from the Well PART 1

When the traveller has passed beyond the Gainsville Pike and has turned from the Aylesbury road towards Pawtucket, he will note that, to his right, the land rises steeply, becoming thickly wooded and tangled with wild underbrush, gradually turning into a series of low, queerly rounded hills, which crowd oppressively along the edges of the road, their crests dotted with odd clumps of trees and ancient roths. From time to time too, he will come across a rutted road, often little more than a cart-track or fire-road, winding up into this region from the Gainsville Pawtucket highway. Such tracks are usually signalled by a solitary wind-rotted fingerpost, bearing the legend 'Crane' in rough lettering. The wise traveller will hurry through this forbidding area and onto the more wholesome hamlets of Hurley and Fayette, and eventually to Pawtucket or to Charlotte beyond, but should he turn from the highway to follow one of the pitted trails, he will find himself passing through the wild highland country, where the low cloud causes distant tree-clusters to take on a strange and menacing aspect and the far monoliths to exude a positive air of evil.

This is Cheat Mountain Country, a desolate upland district not marked on most survey maps. It is sometimes also referred to as the New Exeter Community, although perhaps the term "community" is too precise to describe the hidden hollows where shanty farmhouses press in on themselves against the wind, or the dilapidated and half-deserted villages such as Crane, gathered in the shadows of the queer hills. The inhabitants of this area are not the kind to welcome strangers, many are virtual hermits, shut away in falling farms deep in remote valleys. Few are true Americans at all, but a strange mixture of old Colonial and foreign blood - some are French, others have a Kurdish look about them whilst others still bear the marks of German or Transylvanian stock. Only a few venture far from their ramshackle houses and then only once or twice a year into Aylesbury or Pawtucket to buy supplies or conduct some form of business - most, however, prefer the company of their own reclusive kind.

It is not surprising then, that such self-imposed isolation has led to whispered tales amongst the communities which border on this wild region or that strange stories have grown up regarding the area, even spreading to towns as far away as Wantwich. There are rumours too, for instance, of terrible and monsterous births, the result of generations of inbreeding, amongst the regional stock, of strange religious practices and of dark folk-ways within the ruined villages, of voices calling from gloomy gullys and of nebulous and inhuman shapes, glimpsed at the very edge of dusk between the dark trees atop a low hill. It is also said that, almost twenty years ago, the Aylesbury Sheriffs' Office, together with Federal Agents, once attempted to conduct a house-to-house search for some missing children among the scattered shantys there. If the story is to be believed, nothing was found, but certain of

those who took part in the exercise have since resigned from the police force and have left the state, and at least one is still confined in the asylum at Aylesbury. In view of such dark tales, it is not surprising that few venture into the fearsome hill country and it is said that some of those who never do return.....

I.

The car spluttered and gradually slowed to a halt by the side of the mountain road. Price swore silently and checked the fuel gauge - the needle indicated "Empty". He should have filled the tank before he left Charlotte yet he thought at the time that he could refuel at some local gas station along the route and, somehow, that task had slipped his mind. Now here he was, lost in a wild tract of country, miles from anywhere and well away from a station or garage. Still, it was his own fault, he chided himself, he had taken a wrong turning just outside Pawtucket, thinking it was a shortcut to Gainsville, and, instead of turning back when he realised his mistake, he had driven on, hoping to hit the main Gainsville-Aylesbury highway. He had only succeeded in travelling deeper and deeper into this wild country. He got out of his car and looked about him. On every side, windswept heathland stretched away to the horizon and, both before and behind him, the road lay empty. Apart from the occassional cry of a mountain bird, there was nothing to break the oppressive silence of the mountain evening. Still cursing silently, he took an empty petrol can from the trunk of the car. There was nothing for it but to walk down the road and see if he could find a gas station. Surely, there would be one further on - he had, he recalled, passed an ancient fingerpost pointing the direction to a place called Crane, there would, almost certainly be at least a garage there. He hoped too that perhaps somebody would overtake him and give him a lift there, his car could not be the only one on this lonely road. A chilling wind sprang up and the mountain cloud drew in, in preparation for the oncoming night. Buttoning up his coat, Price began to walk.

An hour later found him still walking. The land on either side now stretched up into a number of empty fields broken only by low stone walls on which large crows settled momentarily to watch him pass. No car had passed him, nor did he meet anyone upon the road. Once, he had seen a man in one of the rocky fields and he had shouted after him, hoping that he would know of some nearby gas station, but the other had ignored him and had turned away into the gloomy horizon leaving Price cursing after him. The sky overhead had grown dark and huge clouds rushed in from the west, promising rain. Price turned up the collar of his coat against the freshening wind but, even as he did so, he felt the first flecks of the threatening shower upon his face. He began to walk more quickly. The drops fell faster and faster, hinting at a fully-fledged downpour and Price found himself running, desperately seeking shelter of some sort. Then, rounding the bend, he saw the house. He could easily have missed it, for it lay at the end of a pitted laneway, in a hollow away from the road, half-hidden by gloomy trees with only its' peaked gable to reveal its' existance to the passing traveller. Although no smoke rose from its' chimney, Price felt sure that he would find direction there and, undoubtedly shelter from the oncoming downpur. The entrance to the laneway was only a few hundred yards ahead and, quickening his step, Price began to hurry towards shelter.

As he drew nearer to the house, however, he feared that his initial impression might be mistaken, for it had the air of a dwelling long abandoned. It was a low, two storey building, built in old Colonial style, around which huddled a number of falling and ruinous outhouses, once used for livestock but now given over to silence and shadows. Some of the windows of the main house were broken and covered in torn stacking - the upper ones had been boarded over he noted - tiles were missing from the roof and birds hopped undisturbed on the unpainted front porch. A screen door, swinging to and fro on a single hinge, banged loudly in the keen wind which heralded rain. As if to add to the total air of desolation, the centrepiece of the overgrown yard in which Price now stood, was a low well, dark and stagnant, its' windlass long broken and moving slightly in the already strengthening breeze. On the crossbar above someone had formed a rough wooden cross, now somewhat overgrown with mould. This was not a house which knew people, and yet, despit its' air of desolation, Price stopped before the damaged screen door, set down his empty petrol can, and gave a low salute - "Hello". If any within the house heard him, they gave no responce and he fancied he heard only the scuttling of rats within the evening gloom. A single

shaft of sunlight suddenly broke through the stormclouds, lighting the front of the house with a jaundiced light and casting a stray beam into the darkness of the interior. With its light Price glimpsed the outlines of furniture, still intact, in what he took to be a kitchen or general living room of the sort.

He was about to step into the gloom of the house when a noise from the yard made him turn in the direction of the well. There was nothing there, merely the wind stirring the rank weeds about the door of an outhouse and the rain on a low roof, yet, for a moment he fancied that, for an instant, someone or something had stood there and had sprang behind the dark well at his movement. Despite the rain he turned and went down to its edge. In the half-light of the evening, the mould-covered cross on the cross-beam dominated the weedchoked yard with its shadow and he wondered why it had been put there - perhaps, he reasoned, it was some form of protection to guard the water against evil spirits for he had heard that hill people were deeply superstitious. Peering into the dark depths, he saw nothing, the well seemed to go down into infinate blackness. On an impulse, he picked up a stone and tossed it over the edge and after a few seconds heard a faint "plop" as though it had fallen into mud. He thought too, that he detected a swirling motion in the dark below. Obviously there was very little water in the well and what there was would not be fit to drink. The expected downpour made him abandon any further investigation and hurry for the shelter of the ancient house.

The interior of the old farmhouse smelt foully. Huge and strangely-formed balls of mottled fungi hung from the walls and ceiling, giving off a fetid odour which made him gag as he entered. As his eyes became accustomed to the gloom, he saw that his initial assumption about the nature of the room had been correct, it was indeed some form of kitchen or living room. In its centre a roughwood table was covered in a form of white fungus which seemed to writhe and squirm at his approach. He noted that a plate and an overturned mug on the table-top also seemed to sport thensame leprous growth and he would have reached down to examine the cup but the fungus seemed to hiss and move with a hellish life of its own, the sight of which filled him with revulsion and made him swiftly withdraw his hand. On the floor, an overturned chair lay, miraculously free of the fungus, although cobwebs encircled its legs and bloated spiders stirred as his shadow fell across their bowers. It was as if someone, disturbed during a meal long ago, had risen suddenly, overturning the mug and the chair and had fled from the room, never to return and leaving any remains to the ministrations of the spiders and the ghastly fungus. Beyond the table, the ash-choked mouth of a gaping fireplace yawned, and even here the fungus had made its home, for it grew in pallid strands through cracks in the chimneybreast. Shuddering, Price passed through an open doorway and into another room.

The room which lay beyond was smaller than the first, but no less gloomy or nauseous. The fungus still clung to the rotting walls, oozing a clear, sticky fluid. The place was devoid of funiture, save for a falling sofa in one corner, but he did notice a pile of something in another, covered with dusty tarpaulin. The thin tendrils of fungus which spread throughout the room, waved with a loathly anticipation at his arrival and, while he wished to see what lay under the filthy covering the dark corner, the thought that it might be a massive fungal growth filled him with dread. Still, he crossed to the tarpaulin and lifted it, ready to leap backwards should the thin feelers try toseize him. Below the tarpaulin lay a pile of books, dusty and covered in a greenish mould. Mercifully, they were free from the white fungus which encrusted the rest of the interior. He lifted one, brushing the dust and green fungral burrs from its leathern cover. The book was clearly very old and perhaps valuble and its title stirred old memories within him for he was certain that he had seen a book bearing the title 'Necronomicon' somewhere before. Instantly, he recalled standing, as a child, in his grandfather's book-lined study in the old house on Stormy Point where he had been brought up. Yes, among Silas Harpur's strange tomes was an almost similar copy of the book he now held in his hand. He shuddered at the remembrance.

When both his parents had been killed in an accident, Jason Price had gone to live with his grandfather near the seaport town of Kalesmouth. Silas Harpur was a queer old man who had been a sea captain in his younger days but now confined himself to what he termed "business" along the upper reaches of the Seaquog River. There were stories told about him and he kept himself to himself, building a huge and gloomy house on the promontary of Stormy Point, where the Sequog spilled into the sea. Price's upbringing had been lonely and gloomy, usually shut up within that rambling

house, with its twisting passageways and lumber-choked rooms. Most of the time, his grandfather kept to his great study, where strange books lined the shelves, poreing over old manuscripts. The only other occupant of the house, apart from the few surly servants, was old Great Aunt Hagar. She was old and wandering in her mind and kept very much to the upper stories of the house with only one servant, Mrs. Curwin, to look after her. At nights Jason Price, lay awake and heard the light tread of her foot in the apartments above. His youth was plagued by strange and terrible dreams and, eventually, when Silas Harpur vanished on a trip to the weed choked Upper Sequog, he quit the house forever. He had never been back.

His reverie was interrupted by a sound from outside. He almost dropped the ancient book, half-aware of the high-pitched voice which called out to him in an unknown tongue from the yard. At first he thought that it might be some woman calling from somewhere nearby, but as he listened, he realised that it was not. The sound was so revolting, so sickening, so thick with obscene innuendo, that he found himself trembling with sheer abhorrance. He thought it might be a man or a deranged person trying to act a female voice by impersonation, yet he could not be sure. Crossing to the outer screen-door, through the fungus-hung kitchen and stood, he gazed out across the weedy yard from a position on the drafty porch. The rain still c ntinued in a steady d wnp ur and there was noone there, nor close by but was it his imagination or did a greenish-yellow glow eminate from the well-mouth? He decided that it was a trick of the light and the rain although the puterescent glow and the imagined and revolting voice seemed to be linked in some inexplicable way which filled his being with a mounting dread.

He turned to the house again and to the pile of books in the dusty corner. Thumbing through the ancient Necronomicon he found its text to be a combination of Latin and a strange and seemingly ancient to ngue, neither of which he could understand. The old tome was falling to rot, pages came away in his hand as he turned them and others were half-coated in mould. He replaced it and lifted another from the pile. 'Magicks of the Chaldees' was more acessible to him and yet he wondered why such an apparantly esoteric text should find its way into the lonely mountain dwelling. The text, this time, was written in English and was hideously illustrated. Price shivered as he turned a page to behold a plate depicting a hideous and gigantic octopoid creature emerging from a seemingly dead pond to feed upon worshippers who made obescence at the waters edge. There was a quality about the illustration which gave the reader a distinct impression that it had been painted from some obscene reality, rather than from the fevered imagination of any artist. Price closed it immediately, thrusting it away from him. Turning to the pile once more, he lifted a smaller, thinner volume. Turning the pages, he found it to be a store bought accounts book which had been used as a journal of some description. It was written in French, a language with which he was not familiar and he was just about to place it back upon the bookpile, when a sound from the rooms overhead made him start. Above him, he imagined, someone crossed the floor - a slow, dragging sound, as if an invalid of some description were moving about - a memory of old, mad Aunt Hagar sprang, unbidden, to his mind. He did not call out, for the terror of the lonely house choked him and made him dumb and the noise stopped. For a long time there was silence, then Price began to investigate once more - perhaps there was a stairway from the upper chambers, down which whoever lurked above might come. The light was failing and he tore a piece of sacking from the grimey windows, to allow the last rays of the sun to illuminate the room. Their fire lit up the empty fireplace, the now scattered pile of books, the old sofa, a broken stool, propped up against a large chest, and a door in the far wall which had been boearded up by a single plank, placed diagonally across it. First, he tried the chest, wary of what might lie within. It opened easily and he found it full of old clothes, thick with mildew. He drew out one and found it to be a girl's dress, patterned with a cheap floral print. The other clothes in the trunk also seemed to belong to children. There was nothing else to be found so he closed it up again and crossed to the boarded door. On the restraining plank, traces of the white fungus also grew and it seemed half-rotten. Doubtless, the door led to the upper reaches of the house but Price had no urge to break the barrier and investigate the rooms above. The sound came from the above once more, but more loudly this time, and, looking upward, he saw to his horror that the white tendrils of the fungus had penetrated from the upper storey, through the ceiling, and now strained downwards in his direction. In the dying light, Price

thought that the ceiling bulged obscenely as though with a fungal weight and, cramming the book into his pocket, he ran through the kitchen and out onto the ghostly porch.

Rain still swept across the yard, forming muddy puddles and Price had no wish to dash through the downpour back towards his car. Further, he doubted that there would be a similar shelter from the rainstorm, as he had found in the old house. All the same, neither had he any wish to face the reeking interior and its fungal occupant again. He therefore returned to the kitchen and righted the fallen chair which he carried out to place on the porch. There he sat, fearful of anything which might emerge from the gloom of the old dwelling and equally terrified of the sinister well, from which he still thought he detected a faint putrescent glow.

The evening was warm and thundery and, despite his fear, a great tiredness came over him. He had spent most of the day travelling without a rest - save for a hurried meal in Charlotte - and now all he wanted to do was rest. Gradually, lulled by the gentle hiss of the rain he secumbed to his weariness and sank into a shallow and fitful sleep.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE

NEXT STOP JUPITER issue 3 is now available, 50p 32 pages A5. Contents include: Intelligence in rolegames, short fiction, a very good review section of fanzines (much lengthier than the efforts in this zine), scenario entitled Shadowplay and and the latest issue of PARTY which includes DIY tips. From Jez Keen, 1 Glenfield Road, Stockport SK4 2QP.

BLACK MAIL

Last issue's 'Black Mail' certainly lead to a fair number of replies, it seems that 'The Mythos Hierarchy' in issue 6 has lived up to all expectations of being contraversial. So to kick off here's James Taylor's reply to my answers in 7.

James W. Taylor, Edinburgh.

The'apparent attitude' that worried me at the time I wrote the letter was the seemingly uncritical acceptance of anything that was claimed to be a part of the Cthulhu Mythos. Yes, I was wrong. As for the piece saying the Other Gods are not evil, I should have expressed myself more clearly. What I was trying to say was that while the Other Gods will gleefully exploit humanity for their own uses, they do not on the whole work towards subjugating humanity - or at least have no coherent plan to that end. While the various Other Gods actions clearly demonstrate that they are utterly evil, that evil tends to be random. Their evil thus stems not from their intentions, but their actions (and yes, it is a fine distinction). As for Gugs, Ghasts and Moon-beasts I can see their potential; 'pointless' was too strong a word to use. On reconsideration, I see no reason why I shouldn't use them.

Nigel Proudfoot, Carlisle, Cumbria.

It is disturbing to note, some CoC players take the 'Chaosium' comments in the CoC rulesbooks to be gospel, and seemingly play the game without reading mythos literature (at least this is the impression I received from reading Mr. Taylor's comments). I myself see this happen frequently at my wargames club where one group of players about five in number play CoC strictly by the rulesbook and not one of them has read a mythos story, to me this is anathema, as surely the great enjoyment of CoC is adventuring and being able to picture yourself in the situations you find yourself, and this I find, can only be due to the fact that I have the mythos stories to boost my imagination.

Simon Redgrave, Birmingham.

In your reply to Mr. Taylor in the last issue, where rather than clarifying the matter you contradict yourself. Here you describe the Mythos as 'ocherent' whereas in the article you spoke of it has having 'no true structure ... at all' Your observation that the Mythos was created by Lovecraft piecemeal seems true enough to me; anyone taking a good bite of his stories along with the fragment and letters will spot a number of contradictions, along with names obviously having the same genetics. There are also conflicting 'flavours' to the mythos - you mentioned the SF/Horror distinction, there are also the matters of the unlikely pseudo-science in the Dunsanian dream visions, ('...Kadath', etc) which is conveniently sidestepped in the rules. The general confusion is added to by the contributions of other authors, who, occassionaly ignorant of some of the 'true facts' of the Mythos provide conflicting legends and creations of their own. Because of this it seems that there are only two ways in which it is realistically possible to treat the whole spectrum of the material. The first is to exclude an air of confusion (the fog of war?) around the Mythos, in which you can pick what 'truths' you like and leave the rest to rumour and lie. The second is to squeeze the Mythos into an artificial framework, lopping off any tentacles that don't fit, something pretty essential in FRP, where all the beasties must have their own SIZ, HP and INT. The problem here tho', is whose frame work to accept, yours, Derleth's or Peterson's?

((Firstly, may I say that I feel I didn't contradict myself, if you reread my article I stated that I felt that 'Lovecraft... did not plan a true structure' for the mythos. In my answer to James I said that Derleth and other writers, most notably the former, helped create a more coherent structure - not Lovecraft! Your suggestion of the Keeper or Mythos scholar 'picking' which parts to include as 'true' Mythos in his campaign is quite interesting. The elimination of certain unsatisfactory mythos ideas, that may conflict with more sound additions, can be explained away as being mere rumour. However, many Mythos tales are written in the form of the first narrative, so I sometimes feel that elimination on the rumour basis is quite difficult, unless of course you decide to say that, for

instance, that notebook detailing the battle of the Great Old Ones with the Elder Gods is in fact a fake written by a complete fraud.))

Peter F. Jeffery, Leicester

There is no use in quoting 'The Shadow Out of Space' to establish Lovecraft's intentions, since this story didn't appear until twenty years after Lovecraft's death & cannot have been composed by Derleth very much earlier. Hence it is not surprising that it contains a clear statement of the Derleth mythos, but is no evidence on Lovecraft's. A study of Lovecraft's letters will make it clear that these ideas (of Derleth's) are actually fundamentally opposed to Lovecraft's outlook.

((Once again I wish to stress that I did not say that I only support Lovecraft's mythos inventions. As I said before these wars were invented by Derleth and Mark Schorer in the tale 'The Lair of the Star Spawn' written in 1932 HPL must have certainly read this tale and did not raise any objections, the fact that HPL did not incorporate this idea into any of his future tales, is I beleive a mere oversight on Lovecraft's behalf and not a refusal of acceptance. In my view HPL did not regard the mythos at all seriously, adding jokes here and there, puns on friends names etc. and would not have dreamed of dropping Derleth's ideas.))

Lawrence Cornford, Sheffield.

I agree that the Other Gods did war with the Elder Gods, but I see no good reason why the Elder Gods should be 'good' quite the reverse, the one example of an Elder God we have points the other way, 'Nodens' - 'Lord of the Abyss' doesn't sound very saintly to me especially when the words Evil, Chaos and Abyss can be linked. The concept of 'good' gods does contradict what HPL thought. A quotation from a letter to J. Vernon Shea indicates this:

"My idea of the essence of a weird tale is that it successfully present a picture of some impressive violation of the established order of things - some defeat of time, space, or natural law, or some subtle intrusion of influences from another imagined order of being upon the familiar order of being."

Maybe this is why he did not complain about 'Lair of the Star-Spawn'. How much of 'Shadow Out of Space' was Derleth's work is hard to say. Rather than beleiving in a "war in Heaven" I believe in a "war in Hell" (Chaos, the Abyss call it what you will) with all the gods showing 'evil' tendancies, but with the insane gods and their servants showing the most extreme 'evil'. A power struggle between the various factions resulted in first a series of wars and secondly the Other Gods being cast out of the Abyss. Then they settled throughout the universe, but particularly on earth where through genetic engineering they tried to create an army to recapture their old position. The Elder Gods, active and dangerous, set out to stop them (sometimes using man as a tool) They warred right up until the end of the Hyborian Age when the lost Old Ones were imprisoned and the minds of man wiped clean of their memory (except it remains the subconcious). Certain 'Psi' sensative people retained the knowledge. These became wizards, witches or cultists. No doubt people will disagree with my view of Anarchist Elder Gods, but ((To quote HPL)) 'every man to his taste'.

((I expect there will be a few replies to that one, so I won't air my views to strongly at this point, suffice to say I found Lawrence's ideas thought provoking but certainly 'not to my taste'.))

Andrew Hall, Lincs

Is 'Y'ha-nthlei' a Deep One city or what?

((Right first time! Y'ha-nthlei is first mentioned in the tale 'The Shadow Over Innsmouth' by HPL. The underwater city is the very same city that was attacked by the government agents discharges off Devil Reef. It is Y'ha-nthlei that the narrator, of the tale, after discovering he is a Deep One decides to 'swim out to that brooding reef in the sea and dive down through black abysses to cyclopean and many columned Y'ha-nthlei'.

((I think we will leave this debate for the time being and move onto those 'Cthulhoid Ramblings' of Alan Jeffrey in the last issue)).

Rik Sheperd, Cheshire.

I would have thought it was impossible to have a 100% in any skill; definately, if Marlowe had 250% in Fast Talk he'd solve all his cases in the first chapter. It must be remembered that Callan was a highly trained hit man, top assassin for the British Government. If he can fit 6 shots into 4.1 seconds, that's because of his training. (There's probably room for a Quick Draw skill - allowing a rapid draw and aim action and a Quick Fire skill - allowing extra shots). Most people won't have this training especially as most investigators won't even have basic military training. I assume that the reason for the limits on number of shots are due to the gunner having to recover from the recoil and re-aim the gun, which is probably more a function of Strength than Dexterity. I suppose you could allow extra shots, say halving the success chance for each successive shot. This would perhaps simulate a character panicking and firing wildly (and missing) which seems quite reasonable for firearms in Lovecraft-'s world.

Andrew Towns, N. Yorks.

The part about the 100% skills is interesting and I have the following to add to it: Mature characters should start off with a couple of career related skills over the 100% mark and even more learned characters (those of ages 50+) may possess a skill over the 300% mark. At first this may seem unfair but it can lead to an improved system.

For example Alex Fowler, an accomplished chemist, encounters a strange glowing substance and finds its chemical components. The Keeper decides that under normal circumstances in a laboratory, the skill modifier would be -40% for identifing the components, ie. Alex would take away this modifier from his chemistry skill to find out his chances of success - under normal circumstances he would have a 140% - 40% - 100% chance of success, (automatic success). Unfortunately Alex is in the middle of the Sahara desert where there is a distinct lack of research labs, so the Keeper decides to alter the skill modifier to -120%, leaving Alex with only a 20% chance of identifing the substance.

Dave Perry, Liverpool.

The ramblings in 'Cthulhoid Ramblings' were ramblings indeed - the ramblings of a madman! ((Oh, Oh!)) The Cthulhu system is one of the best systems around and if any changes are needed, then they are only minor changes, not the wholesale upheaval advocated by Alan Jeffrey. Maybe if we examine each point he raises, we can understand the workings of his mind.

The first point that Alan raises is the fact that characters are "utter wimps". This is how it should be. Imagine how boring it would be if every character made every roll and automatically found every bit of information. It is absurd to have characters with 200%+ in any skill. The maximum you could ever have is 100% in which case you know everything about that particular subject. How can you know more than everything? It is reminiscent of 'Runequest' players with their 300% in everything characters. Alan then suggests changing the combat system so that players can fire five times in a melee round. This is fine if you want to play a game in which players compete to see who can kill the most Shoggoths in a minute, but if you want a system which discourages fighting against mega-monsters, then stick with the present system. Anyway most monsters in CoC are immune to gunfire. Even Callan would be helpless against a Shoggoth, Allan.

Allan's next point about Hit Points is fine but I think most people already use this anyway.

The final suggestion that the Insanity rules be dropped is - well insane! These, like Carl says, make the game. Imagine if there were no San. rules; - every player would read every book, have 300% Cthulhu Mythos, would know every spell and be able to identify every monster in ten seconds. Sorry to sound so negative Allan, but 'one man's meat....'

Cthulhoid Tales of Terror

I have received quite a few letters recently enquiring about mythos tales other than those written by Lovecraft. As far as I am aware there are no collections of stories connected with the Cthulhu Mythos in print in this country at the time of writing, this makes it difficult for the would be collector to obtain or indeed read any of the great tales in this vein, other than the collections currently being published by Granada books which include only HPL titles. What follows is the first installment of a listing of my favourite mythos tales, by contributors that have not had the wide publicity garnered to their mythos efforts that I believe they deserve. In some cases the tales included in this listing are to my mind, better than those written by 'the Old Gentleman' others are listed because they add new and original concepts to the mythos lore that HPL left us with. For whatever reason, the following tales are classics in their own right, some have received extremely limited distribution, perhaps in the form of fanzines such as Dagon, and for this reason I suspect that you may have difficulty in locating them. I have personally read all of the following stories, and have tried to include a brief note of publication and content which may prove useful for those readers wishing to uncover them. I am compiling this list in no particular order, as I shall just scan the bookshelf and files and pick out my favourites. So without further ado may I present the first ten 'Cthulhoid Tales of Terror':-

1) 'Black Man With A Horn' by T. E. D. Klein, for 'New Tales of the Cthulhu Mythos' (A.H. 1980). Tale of a writer who uncovers the sinister Malaysian secret of 'Death's Herald'.

2). 'Harold's Blues', by Glen Singer, for 'Cthulhu: Tales of the Cthulhu Mythos' (Spectre Press 1977?). The tale of Harold Robinson, amazing Blues guitarist and his even stranger pact with Shub-Niggurath.

3). 'The Return of the Lloigor' by Colin Wilson, for 'Tales of the Cthulhu Mythos' (A.H. 1969 and Panther Books 1975). Involves the 'Naacal Tablets' and one man's quest to find Mu, along the way encountering the dark secrets of the Lloigar.

4). 'Return of the Deep Ones' by Brian Lumley, for 'Fantasy Book' (3 vols. 1984/85) My favourite Lumley tale tells of John Vollister and his search for information on a strange sea race - The Deep Ones. (Contains some interesting info. on 'Cthaat Aquadingen' - Lumley's infamous addition to the libraries of arcane tomes.

5). 'Cold Print' by J. Ramsey Campbell for 'Tales of the Cthulhu Mythos' (AH. 1969) A man's passion for pornographic material and other forbidden lore leads him to a strange bookshop where he discovers a copy of the 'Revelations of Glaaki' before coming face to face with that monsterous Great Old One - Y'golonac.

6). 'Notebook Found In A Deserted House' by Robert Bloch, for 'Weird Tales' 1951 (since reprinted in 'Tales of the Cthulhu MYthos' see above). A young boy relates to us via his notebook the events leading to his fatal meeting with cultists and a hungry Shoggoth.

7). 'Ubbo-Sathla' by Clark Ashton Smith, for 'Weird Tales' 1933. (Reprinted in 'Out of Space and Time', A.H. 1941 and Panther Books (vol. 2) 1974. The tale of Paul Tregardis who upon discovering the crystal of the sorcerer Zon Mezzamalech uses the stone to travel back through time where the unfortunate Tragardis encounters something far deadlier - the very source of terrene lifeforms, Ubbo-Sathla.

8). 'The Hounds of Tindalos' by Frank Belknap Long, for 'Weird Tales' 1929 (reprinted by A.H. in book of the same title 1946? Also numerous other reprints). Halpin Chalmers invites the narrator (Long??) to witness the experiments of a new drug, which induces the recipient's mind to travel back through time via the fourth dimension. However the horrible monstrosities that lurk there give Chalmers much more than he had bargained for, and pursue him back via the angles of his very room.

9). 'The Black Stone' by Robert E. Howard, for 'Weird Tales' 1931, reprinted many times. The mystery surrounding a dark monolith and the sinister acts of cultists provide the backdrop of this great mythos tale, which contains such mythos notables as 'Nameless Cults', Justin Geoffrey and Von Junzt.

10). 'The Return of Hastur' by August Derleth for 'Weird Tales' March 1939. Reprinted in 'The Mask of Cthulhu' Consul Books 1961 & Neville Spearman 1974, A.H. 1964.?? The tale of Paul Tuttle's errie investigations into the deadly secret of his dead ancestor Amos whose arcane tomes and eldritch manners hinted at the return of a sinister entity to the earth, but to what haven would it return, this terrifying mystery is left to Paul to discover.

Right that's your lot for now, next issue includes tales 11-20 featuring authors such as Bloch, Lumley, Adrian Cole and more.

CTHULHOID RAMBLINGS

by Dave Perry.

In Chapter 7 of the CoC rulesbook, it recommends that players divide up into one of two classes. The first is the 'wise old professor, spending his time in reading arcane manuscripts and learning the sanity blasting spells' and the second is the 'strong high Con. man with a fairly good ability to fight, whether with fists or gun.' I've found that players generally fall into one of the two categories: some players always want to get stuck in, whilst others, who are easily bored by fighting, prefer to do the thinking. This way of playing is fine....until certain situations arise.

When during the course of investigations, something unexpected turns up, like a house of dismembered bodies, the Professor San. 30 types are naturally reluctant to go in, fearing for their sanity. They opt to wait outside while the high San. players go in to investigate. Here the problems start. If like me you beleive that the players shouldn't know what their characters don't, then you will send the player out of the room until the others come out. At this point most Professor San. 30 types choose to go in after all, not wanting to miss the 'exiting bits'. Of course the inevitable always happens; the professor sees something he shouldn't and is sent straight off to the asylum. The player then has to use an NPC for the rest of the game. Not very satisfying for the player, but what can be done about it?

One solution is to simply have the player sit in and watch the game while his character remains outside. However, such players can't keep their mouths shut and often contribute to the situation, identifying monsters, unravelling clues, and piecing information together. In this way, he has found out things without putting his character in danger. Clearly another solution must be found.

My solution is for such players to temporarilly take on the role of an NPC for the 'dangerous bit'. Most scenarios have large casts of NPC's some of whom go along with the investigators to help them, (Cthulhu fodder mostly, they always die first). Why not, at the point of the Professor San. 30 thinking the situation too dangerous, could his player not take on the part of an NPC and leave his charcter in a place of safety. Then he can play a part in the 'exciting bit' without worrying about his San. If he survives, he then reverts back to the Professor and the NPC becomes an NPC again. Consider the situation - Professor San. 14 type and Tough Guy San. 90 wish to see if Old Silas Creep really is buried in the graveyard. Not wanting to soil their hands in menial work, they hire to burley men to dig up the grave while they watch. When the coffin is uncovered, they find the grave empty and a hole leading deep into the earth. Clearly something to be investigated! However, Prof. San. 14 is too scared to go down, so he and Tough Guy pay the men extra if they will go down with Tough Guy. The two greedy men agree so the three of them go down together. At this point the Prof's. player takes on the part of a gravedigger (the Keeper inventing Stats. at that moment or taking them from his 'dead range') and the Prof. San 14 (now a temporary NPC) remains on the surface. Of course the player must now play the part of the greedy gravedigger.

There are a number of advantages to the above method of playing; character survival not the least of them. The players are always involved, even if their characters are not. When the party meets the gibbering nasty, the Keeper no longer has to pull his punches and guess guess who goes first. Back to Chapter 7 again - "the inhabitant decides to make away with one of them, have him make away with the hireling." A few nasty deaths always adds to the excitement and danger. Also, players won't be so cheesed off when it's not their real character who has died. Even if it comes to

the crunch and the whole party goes, then there will always be at least one survivor to carry on the fight.

In this way, low Sanity characters with a high 'Cthulhu Mythos' can carry on almost indefinately. NPC's are always available. Some scenarios have them just waiting there. Black Tom in 'Black Devil Mountain', Dr. Huntington Dare in 'The Rescue', Tommy Hayes in 'The Coven at Cannich' etc. If none are written in, then the Keeper can invent them, like the two gravediggers above. Finally if all else fails, the character can always hire an assistant.

"Well Smith would you like to come on a field expedition with me?"

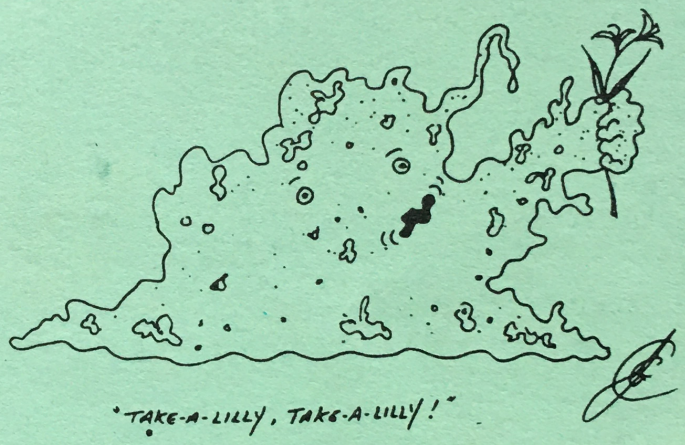
"Gosh Professor, can I really?"

"Of course, my dear chap, there may be a few surprises..."

Thanks this issue go to:- every monsterous claw which contributed within these pages, Marc Gascoigne, Ian Marsh, IMAGINE magazine, WHITE DWARF, Josh Pinto and all those Cthulhoids buying this issue.

ATTENTION ALL CTHULHOIDS

Don't forget to vote for DAGON in the 1985 GAMESDAY AWARDS poll, published in WHITE DWARF - thanks



Zine Plug... BLURRED VISION is the title of a new fanzine, edited by Rick Byrne, Issue One will contain: Waffatorial, The Hyborian Age, A Fishy Tale (CoC scenario), The Zine reviews, a new Ringworld race, Traveller articl, A Morrow Project in Europe article, Bunnys and Burrows review and an article on Insanity in RPG's. Price will be 40p stg. + an S.A.E. should be out early July. Give it a try!

Contributing Corpses

CARL FORD, Editor.

ANDY BENNISON, ROBERT J. CURRAN, ALAN JEFFREY, PAUL NEWMAN, DAVE PERRY, MARCUS L. ROWLAND - Writers.

J. G. CADERA, MARK CARTER, GARETH JACKSON, MARK KETHERINGTON, PAUL NEWMAN, GARY MARSHALL - Artists.

DAGON issue 9 will contain: Scenario 'The Enemy Within', Cthulhoid Ramblings, 'The Horror in the Bibliography' (HPL essay by Peter F. Jeffery), a look at Dr. John Dee's translation of the 'Necronomicon' including full documentation of hideous contents, spells etc., a look at Lithomancy and the second installment of 'The Voice From The Well'. Price 70p available from September.

DAGON is a non-profit organisation run by fans of HPL and CoC, a 6 issue subscription costs £4.20, DAGON is published bi-monthly.

'CALL OF CTHULHU' is a fantasy role-playing game published by CHAOSIUM INC., Box 6302, Albany CA 94706. (USA) and produced under licence in the UK by GAMES WORKSHOP LTD.